



News Release

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Utah Hispanic Disease Rates Fall

(Salt Lake City, UT) – A new report by the Utah Department of Health (UDOH), Center for Multicultural Health (CMH) shows that Utah Hispanic/Latino health has improved since 2005, when CMH was established and baseline data were collected. The Utah Hispanic population showed improvement over time in 10 of 11 critical disease indicators.

Hispanics saw declines in several disease rates from 2005-2010, including: gonorrhea (from 34.6 cases/100,000 to 26.4/100,000; tuberculosis (from 5.9/100,000 to 4.2/100,000); and arthritis (from 14.4% to 11.0%). There was also improvement in the rates of many cancers, including: colon (14.7/100,000 to 13.6/100,000), lung (10.5/100,000 to 8.8/100,000), breast (46.6/100,000 women to 41.8/100,000) and prostate (36.7/100,000 men to 33.9/100,000) cancers. This ethnic group also had lower rates of death from diabetes (from 24.3/100,000 to 20.8/100,000) and stroke (from 10.7/100,000 to 9.7/100,000) over the time period. The coronary heart disease death rate also improved when controlling for age.

The current Utah Hispanic rates were better than the current statewide rates for arthritis (11.0% vs. 22.3% statewide); coronary heart disease death (16.5/100,000 vs. 59.2/100,000 statewide); breast cancer (41.8/100,000 women vs. 90.4/100,000 women statewide) and prostate cancer (33.9/100,000 men vs. 120.2/100,000 men statewide). Utah Hispanics still had higher rates of gonorrhea (26.4/100,000 vs. 17.3/100,000) and tuberculosis (4.2/100,000 vs. 1.4/100,000) than Utahns statewide in spite of the other improvements over time.

Chlamydia is the only disease that increased among Utah Hispanics. Chlamydia has been on the rise statewide and among all races and ethnicities for whom data are available.

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“Our Hispanic community is becoming better informed about how to navigate the healthcare system, the importance of choosing healthy lifestyles and the overall significance of early screenings,” said Sabrina Morales, Executive Director of Comunidades Unidas, a local non-profit working with CMH to eliminate ethnic health disparities in Utah. “We are very excited to hear that our community’s health is improving and, while we still have a lot of work ahead, particularly in the area of access to health care, we need to take a moment to celebrate these victories.”

Other Utah minority populations also saw some improvements in health status, but not across as many disease categories as the Hispanic population. “That doesn’t mean the other minority groups aren’t improving,” explained April Young Bennett, Multicultural Health Specialist, CMH, UDOH. “The other Utah minority populations are much smaller than the Utah Hispanic population, so it may take longer to see statistically significant differences in their rates.”

Data sources included birth and death certificates, statewide surveys, and mandated reporting of certain diseases and conditions by health organizations. For more information, see the complete report at <http://health.utah.gov/cmh/data/MovingForward.pdf>.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.